Levine, Amy-Jill and Douglas Knight. *The Meaning of the Bible: What the Jewish Scriptures and Christian Old Testament Can Teach Us*. New York: HarperOne, 2011.

Chapter Eleven

In describing the politics and the economy of ancient Israel, L. and K. offer readers a very useful summary of such things as the nation-state (and taxation), and the cities which spotted the country (of which there were four types- capitals, royal cities, administrative cities, and residential cities).

The household, the clan, and the tribe too are explained.

Readers familiar with standard Old Testament introductions will probably be fairly familiar with the material here and those who aren't will benefit by a careful reading.

More advanced students and specialists will find few new insights and no new information.

The lead sentence of the closing paragraph says everything that needs to be said here for the purpose of the present 'serial review':

The political and economic makeup of Israel and Judah was as complex and varied as that of any culture that survives for many centuries (p. 359).

I apologize for not finding myself more excited about this chapter- perhaps it's my decades-long exposure to the work of sociologists and their approach to ancient societies or perhaps it's just my current frame of mind. Whatever the cause, though the chapter is useful, it isn't inspiring or ground breaking (or, really, to be perfectly honest, very thrilling).

I have higher hopes for the next- on the Diaspora.

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